



Cleopatra's stunning make-up doubled as eye cure 埃及豔后超濃眼妝好處多多

French scientists have discovered that there is **more than meets the eye** to Ancient Egypt's stunning eye make-up. It not only shielded wearers from evil spirits but also protected them against eye disease, according to French scientists.

Ancient Egyptians some 4,000 years ago produced the make-up used to darken and **adorn** eyes with lead and lead salts in mixtures that sometimes took a month to **concoct**, said Philippe Walter, who co-headed a team of scientists from the Louvre museum and the CNRS national research institute.

"We knew ancient Greeks and Romans too had noted the make-up had medicinal properties, but wanted to determine exactly how," he told AFP.

Contrary to the widely held belief that lead is harmful, the team, using analytical chemistry, determined that "in very low **doses** lead does not kill cells."

Instead, it produces a molecule — nitric oxide — that activates the immune defense system, which beats back bacteria in case of eye infection.

The research was carried out using a tiny electrode, the tenth of the size of a hair, to look at the effect of a lead chloride synthesized by the Egyptians — laurionite — on a single cell.

The study was released online by the journal *Analytical Chemistry*. (AFP)

法國一群科學家已經發現，古埃及誇張的眼妝其實有更重要的作用，它不僅可以保護上妝者不受惡靈侵擾，也能防止他們染上眼疾。

共同帶領來自羅浮宮博物館及法國國家研究院CNRS科學研究團隊的菲力普·瓦特說，古埃及人約四千年前開始使用這種化妝品來加深及裝飾他們的眼睛，這種混有鉛和鉛鹽的物質有時需花費一個月才能調製而成。

他對法新社表示：「我們知道古希臘人和羅馬人也都提到這種化妝品具有藥效，但我們想查明確切的原因。」

與普遍認為鉛對人體有害的看法相反，該組研究團隊利用分析化學，測出「在非常低的劑量下，鉛並不會殺害細胞」。

反之，其產生的「一氧化氮」分子還能活化人體免疫系統，對抗會感染眼睛的細菌。

這項研究利用相當於一根頭髮十分之一細的微小電極，檢視埃及人合成的氯化鉛「水氯鉛礦」作用在單一細胞上的效果。

該研究被刊登在《分析化學》期刊的網站上。

(法新社／翻譯：袁星塵)

A boy rides a horse in front of the Great Pyramids of Giza on the outskirts of Cairo, on Oct. 12, 2009. PHOTO: REUTERS

二〇〇九年十月十二日，一個男孩騎馬經過開羅郊區的吉薩大金字塔前。

照片：路透社

TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

1. **adorn** /ə'dɔ:rn/ v.

裝飾 (zhuang1 shi4)

例：A priceless painting adorns the corridor of the town hall.

(市政府的走廊上裝飾著一幅無價的畫作。)

2. **concoct** /kən'kɔkt/ v.

調製 (tiaoz2 zhi4)

例：Percy concocted a strange drink using whiskey, cranberry juice and anything else he could get his hands on.

(珀西用威士忌、蔓越莓汁和手邊能找到的一些材料調製了一杯奇怪的調酒。)

3. **dose** /dos/ n.

劑量 (ji4 liang4)

例：Take one dose before you go to bed, and you'll feel better in no time.

(睡前服用一劑，你很快就會好起來了。)

LANGUAGE POINT 重要片語

more than meets the eye 比表面看起來更為複雜

If there is **more to something than meets the eye**, it has hidden qualities that aren't immediately obvious.

Examples: "There's a lot **more to Desmond than meets the eye**," or "There's **more to this crime than meets the eye** — I think we need to investigate further."

如果說「there is more to something than meets the eye」，就表示這件事有一些無法立即清楚辨明的隱藏特質。

例如：「戴斯蒙這個人不像外表看起來那麼簡單」，或是「這個案件比表面看起來更複雜——我認為我們應該進行更深入的調查」。